

# Musings on Jennifer Check and Jesus Christ

or

the Christian Allegory and Feminism in Jennifer's Body

By P. A. Todzia, M.L.S.

*“People are occasionally made virtuous by love.”*

*—Yukio Mishima*

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This interpretation is based on the theatrical release of *Jennifer's Body*, screenplay by Diablo Cody and directed by Karyn Kusama. Starring Megan Fox, as Jennifer, the popular girl possessed by a demon; Amanda Seyfried, as Needy, Jennifer's friend; Johnny Simmons, as Chip, Needy's boyfriend; and Adam Brody, as Nikolai, a singer who sacrifices Jennifer and unleashes a demon. It presupposes that the reader has seen this film.

One doesn't normally think of a vapid, promiscuous teenaged girl as a hero, but that's what Jennifer Check is. In fact she is more than that. While Needy tells the story, it is Jennifer who is the central figure—the Christ figure. Yeah, its hard to believe that she is why millions take Communion every Sunday, but it's true.<sup>1</sup>

The similarities between the character Jennifer Check and Jesus Christ start simply with their initials. Both are J. C. The writer, Diablo Coby, who went to a Catholic school,<sup>2</sup> could have named her character anything—she could have called her Jennifer Smith, or Suzie Smith, or perhaps Barbie Smith.

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<sup>1</sup> Megan Fox is a sex goddess, but the author requires more evidence before declaring her to be God.

<sup>2</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diablo\\_cody](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diablo_cody)

The character is a small town sex symbol—she could have been called Jennifer Monroe after Marilyn Monroe, the tragic sex symbol whose visage is tattooed on the right arm of the star Megan Fox, but she is Jennifer Check: “Jennifer” from the song “Jennifer’s Body” by Hole,<sup>3</sup> and a popular girl’s name, related to “Guinevere”—white phantom—and “Winifred”—friend of peace. “Jesus,” a form of “Joshua,” was a common name in the Holy Land in the first century; it means “God will help.”<sup>4</sup> As a verb, “check” can mean to “approve.”<sup>5</sup> You might check off the items on a list, thus confirming them, or you might check a name on a ballot. And “Christ” comes from the Greek word “christos,” which means “anointed,” or chosen by divine intervention.<sup>6</sup> The last names, therefore, are similar, but not exactly synonymous.

The title “Christos” also provides an important motif applied exclusively to Jennifer and her friend Needy, and that is “X”: the symbol of Christ.<sup>7</sup> In Greek, “Christos” is written with an “X.”<sup>8</sup> Thus we derive the word “Xmas.”<sup>9</sup> The X appears on either side of Jennifer’s bed—her lamps are stylized Xs. When Jennifer and Needy go to hear the band, Jennifer’s hand is marked with an X; Needy’s mark is shown later when she’s on the phone with Chip. When Jennifer is on the phone with Needy, and Needy interrupts

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<sup>3</sup> From the album *Live Through This*, 1994.

<http://www.thefrisky.com/post/246-diablo-cody-interview/>

<sup>4</sup> Information on these names is from the *Dictionary of First Names* by Alfred J. Kolatch, Perigee, 1980.

<sup>5</sup> For the many meanings of “check,” including confirmation, substantiation, verification see <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/check>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Christ>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/x>

<sup>8</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christ>

<sup>9</sup> *Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*, Springfield: Merriam, 1981.

her to take a call from Chip, Jennifer says, "I'm X-ing you out." When Needy is put in solitary, a large X is on the floor of the cell. And it appears later in their fight scene, when Needy slashes an X onto Jennifer's body, literally and symbolically branding her with the symbol of Christ.

In the opening shots of *Jennifer's Body*, we see a horse grazing in the backyard of Jennifer's house. A Christ figure like Jennifer should be associated with a lamb, a much used symbol.<sup>10</sup> A horse figure also appears in Needy's bedroom; and at school, a horse fetus is seen preserved in a jar. Why horses? In this instance, the horse is a Feminist and religious symbol. The Feminist filmmakers<sup>11</sup> are no doubt familiar with Rosa Bonheur,<sup>12</sup> a painter famous in the nineteenth century for her depictions of animals. Her most noted work is *The Horse Fair*. The horses in the film are an homage to her. Bonheur has been called a proto-Feminist. She was a successful artist when that field was the exclusive domain of men. She wore male attire because it was more practical for her work. She cohabited with women, which considering the lesbian subtext in the film, makes her an appropriate reference. More significant, however, is the fact that her father belonged to the Saint-Simonians, a Christian-Socialist group that searched for a female messiah.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> See John 1:29.

<sup>11</sup> Both Cody and Kusama are known for Feminist views. For example see, <http://articles.latimes.com/2008/sep/21/entertainment/ca-cody21>  
<http://moviesblog.mtv.com/2009/09/18/jennifers-body-director-karyn-kusama-on-women-in-hollywood-diablo-cody-andoutsiders/>  
<http://www.eyeweekly.com/article/71292>  
<http://www.thefrisky.com/post/246-diablo-cody-interview/>

<sup>12</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosa\\_Bonheur](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosa_Bonheur)

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

In works of art, Jesus is often depicted with a wound in his side. Jesus was pierced by the Holy Lance,<sup>14</sup> also called the Spear of Longinus;<sup>15</sup> Jennifer was pierced with the pole of a pool skimmer by Chip. Although Jennifer makes a sexual joke of being impaled by asking Needy for a Tampon,<sup>16</sup> we can dismiss the obvious symbolism of the pole, the sexual: a long rod, wielded by a male, penetrating an attractive girl. Chip is not a rapist: he is tender and caring towards Needy; he refuses to kiss Jennifer at the pool because of loyalty to Needy, and is then attacked by Jennifer. And although severely wounded, Chip comes to Needy's aid. The filmmakers would not dare accuse Chip even metaphorically. It could be chance that he uses the pole, simply grabbing the nearest object that might be used as a weapon; but when we combine the pole/spear with the other Christian symbolism in the film, it becomes a part of a powerful allegory of salvation. The important thing to remember about an allegory is that it is revealed by symbols, not by the literal. In the literal sense, Jennifer is speared with the pole of the pool skimmer; but allegorically, she is suffering one of the wounds inflicted on the body of Christ.

Impalement appears earlier in the film as well. Jennifer mentions losing her "back door" virginity to a police cadet named Roman. Jesus was Crucified by Roman soldiers.<sup>17</sup> With Jennifer, her sexuality has made her a martyr:

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<sup>14</sup> The Spear is mentioned only in the Gospel of John (19:34). John was the only male disciple present at the Crucifixion.

<sup>15</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint\\_Longinus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Longinus)

<sup>16</sup> There is plenty of witty dialogue, but the themes of this film are in no way comedic. It is not really a comedy in that sense.

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12083c.htm>

she suffers the painful ordeal with the cadet because she is a mere sex object—a slave to the pleasures of a persecuting male. Like Needy, who gladly suffers abuse from Jennifer and reciprocates with adoration if not love, Jennifer is a masochist: she revels in her sexual escapades. The girls are indeed sisters or twins.

On an innocent note, in a flash back when Jennifer and Needy are playing in the sandbox, Jennifer gets a tack in the palm of her hand. This wound is an allusion to Stigmata,<sup>18</sup> and it foreshadows Jennifer's eventual sacrifice. Needy partakes of Jennifer's blood by cleaning the wound with her mouth; by this communion, Needy is associated or twinned with Jennifer, because of a bond to Jennifer's soul, represented by Jennifer's blood.<sup>19</sup>

In the Infancy Gospel of Thomas, a New Testament apocryphal text, Jesus is an enfant terrible, much like Jennifer Check.<sup>20</sup> This is not directly referenced in the movie, but Cody could have made Jennifer beautiful *and* nice; however, she made her beautiful and mean. This is more than coincidental, and might even be heretical, i.e. when Jennifer is possessed by the demon, does the parallel run both ways? Are the filmmakers saying that the Holy Spirit was really a demon that descended on Jesus when he was baptized by John the Baptist? That would be truly revolutionary. More likely, however, is the idea that Jennifer is flawed in order that she not lose

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<sup>18</sup> <http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Stigmata>

<sup>19</sup> See Gen. 9:4–5, where "soul" (Heb. *nephesh*) and "blood" (Heb. *dam*) are equated. The New World Translation (1984) renders it, "Only flesh with its soul—its blood—you must not eat. And besides that, your blood of your souls shall I ask back...."

<sup>20</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Infancy\\_Gospel\\_of\\_Thomas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Infancy_Gospel_of_Thomas)

her humanity completely. Christ was both God and man together. If Jennifer be a demon, she is dehumanized; if she be a mere sex object, she is dehumanized; if she be perfect—like a Disney princess parodied in the scene with the gathering forest animals when the football player is slain—she is dehumanized. Jennifer is a complete human being with all the desires, vulnerabilities, and flaws that accompany her humanity. She has to have these flaws, especially jealousy, because the demon that takes possession of her is a conceit to dramatize the sexual dynamics that exist between her and Needy. The real demon in this film is not a servant of Satan, but sex. And Jennifer's sexual desire and promiscuity lead her to Nikolai, lead singer of Low Shoulder.

On the fateful night, when the girls flee the burning bar where Low Shoulder has been playing, it is Needy who leads Jennifer out the window—Needy takes charge and leads Jennifer from the flames. Fire signifies hell—Needy is leading Jennifer out of hell. This foreshadows the ending, when Needy saves Jennifer from the demon by stabbing her. Outside the burning bar, Jennifer drops to her knees; Needy is alarmed. Jennifer is conscious but unresponsive to Needy's calls. One might think that she is suffering from smoke inhalation, but she was literally one breath behind Needy, and Needy has no problem breathing. Jennifer is really in some sort of religious ecstasy or passion. The religious imagery supports this conclusion. Nikolai approaches and gives Jennifer a drink from a glass—he forces her to drink. What is happening here? Again, we have a parallel with Christ—this is the “Bitter Cup,” which symbolizes Jesus's fate on the Cross: Jennifer must accept her fate just as Jesus did—She gets into the van, “the ’89 rapist,”

because it is the will of God. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says, “O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.”<sup>21</sup> Mark has these words, “And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.”<sup>22</sup> In the Gospel of Luke, it says, “And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed. Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.”<sup>23</sup> This is just before Jesus is arrested. In the Gospel of John, Jesus tells Peter, “Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?”<sup>24</sup> Jesus is then bound by the soldiers and led away. Jennifer is led away to her death too.

Before the prom when Jennifer is sitting at her vanity, her eyes fill with tears. At this point, she should be happy: the demon in her will have fresh meat at the prom to feed on; however she is not happy. Earlier in the film, she expresses her joy at being beautiful and energetic after feeding. This is important: Jennifer is crying, not the demon or evil spirit. The demon would not care if it was killing boys and spreading misery. Sitting before the mirror, Jennifer hates what she has become. It is more than shallowness on her part. The mirror is a window to the soul in many vampire works—the vampire casts no reflexion because it has no soul. While Jennifer is not a

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<sup>21</sup> Matthew 26:42.

<sup>22</sup> Mark 14:35–36.

<sup>23</sup> Luke 22:41–42.

<sup>24</sup> John 18:11.



vampire, she is asymptotically close to one—a vampire feeds on blood, Jennifer feeds on flesh and blood; and the sexual parallels are obvious. The mirror here is not simply a prop for Jennifer to examine her physical form, it is a portal into her spiritual hell.

Early in the film, a Crucifix<sup>25</sup> is seen hanging on a wall by the door of Needy's house when Jennifer returns from the forest. This cannot be a coincidence—these sets are designed and the shots storyboarded. The Crucifix is not there by chance. It foreshadows Jennifer's second sacrifice at the hands of her friend Needy in order to stop the evil which Low Shoulder released with the first sacrifice.

At the beginning of the film (which is the end because the story goes full circle) when Jennifer is lying on her bed, she sees Needy's face in the window, but simply turns away. The demon in Jennifer is weak because it did not have a full meal at the prom, enabling Jennifer to check—pun intended—its influence on her. She knows that Needy is coming for her, yet she does not even take any defensive action such as fleeing. When this scene resumes toward the end of the film, Needy jumps through the window; the two fight, first on the bed and then in the air when Jennifer/demon levitates. Just before rising into the air, Jennifer's arms and hands are posed as if she's on a cross. The two girls grapple in the air, during which Needy pulls off Jennifer's heart pendant; then a flash back to the girls in the sandbox appears—“Sandbox love never dies”! Through all the horror, Jennifer has never stopped loving Needy. Needy wins because Jennifer

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<sup>25</sup> <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/crucifix>

ceases to resist. This surrender is sudden and deliberate, not a gradual wearing down of a weakened monster. Jennifer does not want to hurt Needy (as per her line in the kissing scene—"I couldn't bring myself to hurt you. I mean, I'm a really good friend."), and she wants Needy to end the horror. In this battle, Jennifer is fighting not only Needy but the demon or evil spirit also. Jennifer transcends her worldly love of Needy with all the jealousy and manipulation entailed with it, and moves to a higher love—she loves Needy selflessly. When her necklace is ripped off, Jennifer willfully offers her body as a sacrifice rather than permitting the evil spirit to kill her friend. Jennifer is acting out the type of love from John 15:13—"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." It is really Jennifer's love that defeats the demon. Jennifer offers herself as sacrifice for Needy and the boys in the town, and she is a martyr in the battle against evil—she is even marked with the sign of Christ—an X—during the fight, when Needy slashes her abdomen. By crossing Jennifer out, Needy actually saves her soul.



Fig. 1 *La Pietà* by Michelangelo Buonarroti.



Fig. 2 “Jennifer's Pietà” from *Jennifer's Body*. Director: Karyn Kusama.

When Jennifer's mother comes in, she cradles her dead daughter in a manner evocative of Michelangelo's *Pietà*, a sculpture of the Holy Virgin cradling the crucified Christ.<sup>26</sup> (See Figs. 1 and 2.) Jennifer's mother was never shown before, and she seems to resemble the sculptured Madonna. Her only purpose in the film is to perform this one act. This symbol is extremely powerful. According to Christian teaching, Jesus died for the sins of humanity. Through his sacrifice, the sins are forgiven. He allowed himself to be sacrificed in order that people could find everlasting life with God.

That the girls' love survives Jennifer's death is indicated by the poses. When the girls are lying on the bed, Jennifer's head tilts to her right, Needy's to her left and her left knee is raised. The poses suggest the shape of a heart. Also note the angel statue right over Jennifer's body.

We know that Jennifer finds redemption from her countenance after she dies a second time. Her face becomes placid, pacific, and radiant. This cliché in vampire works and horror films originated in *Dracula* in 1897. When Lucy, turned into a vampire who preys on children, is staked by Dr. Van Helsing and crew “her face of unequalled sweetness and purity” returns. And her fiancé, Arthur, says to Van Helsing, ““God bless you that you have given my dear one her soul again.””<sup>27</sup> Jennifer has found peace. She is no longer merely a body—a vessel for evil; her soul has found salvation. The concept

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<sup>26</sup> <http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/pieta>

<sup>27</sup> Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, Chap. 16.

of salvation is an important theme in *Jennifer's Body*. It signifies that Jennifer has triumphed over her flaws.

In the screenplay, Jennifer's death scene is called a “white-trash *Pieta*,”<sup>28</sup> but all the Christian symbols and references are presented without mockery in the film. The only exception is the bloody Madonna image of Jennifer in the road when Needy is fleeing from Chip's house. Later on, in the bedroom/kissing scene, Needy says to Jennifer of her appearance in the road, “You didn't even look human.” This seems to be an insult to the Mother of God. Why? For centuries the Roman Catholic Church has venerated Mary as the Virgin Mother of the Saviour while oppressing human sexuality, especially female sexuality. This exaltation of virginity has deprived women of their humanity, seems to be what the filmmakers are saying with the bloody Madonna image.

Aside from this Christian symbolism, *Jennifer's Body* has been described as a Feminist or Post-Feminist horror film; therefore, we must ask the question, why would Feminist filmmakers make a movie which turns a mean-girl slut into something far worse—an inhuman monster? Turning Jennifer into a demonic butcher is worse than objectifying women in pornography—it is robbing her of all humanity. It is not simply objectifying her, it is transforming her into a vessel of misanthropic hate. Of course they would not do this and have not. Jennifer is more than a sexy bitch and Needy is more than a mousey sidekick. Jennifer in the split second that her BFF necklace is torn off, finds the strength within herself to overpower the evil

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<sup>28</sup> Diablo Cody, *Jennifer's Body* (screenplay, 2007), p. 9.

spirit inside her, thus allowing Needy to sacrifice her again. Jennifer finds the power to truly love Needy and others.

By destroying the evil spirit or demon, Needy demonstrates her own strength and courage—she asserts her own personality, and is no longer dominated by Jennifer. By destroying the evil spirit or demon, Needy also subverts the traditional fairytale theme of a beautiful princess being rescued by a handsome prince, for she saves Jennifer's soul—Needy is Jennifer's true love, as if in a fairytale. Despite the dysfunctional nature of their relationship, Jennifer and Needy's love endures: having gone through losing her BFF, bearing witness to horrible murders, seeing Chip die, and finally losing Jennifer again, Needy declares, “Sandbox love never dies.” (Remember, they had been friends since childhood, and Needy is narrating the story after the action has taken place.) She knows that she truly loves Jennifer. Their love is also redeemed by the second sacrifice in much the same way as Jesus's sacrifice was intended to redeem humanity's relationship with God.

In the kissing scene, Needy breaks off the action, not because of heterosexuality or homophobia, but because she knows that Jennifer is possessed by an evil spirit or demon; and she has conflicted feelings—one of the “sexual demons” in the story—because of Chip. Needy seems to have a healthy relationship with Chip; but when she is making love to him, it is rather staid and mechanical, and she simultaneously experiences a psychic link with Jennifer, who is killing one of her victims. The images that Needy sees during sex with Chip are disturbing ones, indicating that she is not a

heterosexual. Sublimated lesbianism is another "sexual demon" in the film. Jennifer is not in love with any of her male partners, and Needy is not really in love with Chip—she literally runs from his bedroom. However, the sex connects Needy to Jennifer—the girls clearly are in love. Needy's conflicted feelings on this point are another sign of her weakness, which she eventually overcomes. When Needy becomes a stronger woman, she is able to love Jennifer. "I love you, Jennifer," is one of the things she means when she says, "Sandbox love never dies." *Jennifer's Body* is a love story—the tragic love story of Jennifer and Needy.

Allegorically, Needy assumes different personifications in the film. In the kissing scene, Needy is analogous to Judas Iscariot. "And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he...."<sup>29</sup> Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss;<sup>30</sup> Needy returns Jennifer's kiss, then jumps off the bed and orders her to leave. Once more, Jennifer's suffering is a parallel to Christ: she is rejected by the person closest to her. In the sandbox with Jennifer is Needy; when Jennifer is excited about seeing the band, Needy is with her; when Jennifer is murdered and resurrected by the demon, she turns to Needy; when Jennifer reveals the dark secret of her new identity, it is to Needy. After the night of the kiss, Needy does not talk to Jennifer at school anymore. After Jesus was arrested, even Peter denied three times.<sup>31</sup> But the friendship between Needy and Jennifer must be disrupted, so that Needy can kill Jennifer and vanquish the demon. By the

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<sup>29</sup> Mark 14:44.

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Judas+Kiss>

<sup>31</sup> Matthew 26:69–75 and Mark 14:66–72.



second sacrifice, Jennifer becomes more than a slut and more than a monster —She becomes a martyr.

The second sacrifice is the strongest Feminist statement in the film, for, while Christianity itself is not subverted, the traditional patriarchal figures of God and Saviour are. What better way is there to subvert the male messiah image and the patriarchal elements of Christianity than by making the saviour of the town a previously vapid, promiscuous teenaged girl? A girl who is a lesbian too.

Although Needy does not die, she is a co-martyr with her friend. They share the blood connection, “X” motif, a long friendship, and a psychic connection all of which point to a unique spiritual union. Jennifer and Needy are co-saviours, if you will. Needy suffers in her own way: she loses her BFF, her boyfriend, and her freedom when she is put in a mental institution.

Although Needy breaks out of the institution, she remains a fugitive. The filmmakers are saying that strong women pay a heavy price in our society—they don't conform to that archetype of the Disney princess who must be rescued by a prince, and they are punished for that. Needy's suffering, or “the passion of Needy,” is foreshadowed when she is talking to her mother who describes a nightmare in which people are trying to nail Needy to a tree “like J.C.”—the initials of Jennifer Check and Jesus Christ—and Needy's mother crosses herself. This can only be symbolic of crucifixion, thus extending the Christ conceit to Needy. This dualism is not at all incongruous: Catholics and other Christians believe in the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit); therefore, this coupling of Needy and Jennifer fits the

Christian symbolism quite well. Like the first member of the Trinity, Needy seems to possess a certain omniscience—she knows Jennifer will arrive at her house before Jennifer appears—and omnipresence—she overhears Nikolai and Dirk talking about Jennifer in the bar, but she misinterprets their conversation. She correctly declares Nikolai to be evil when he takes Jennifer away and that something awful will befall her friend. Needy alone discovers that Jennifer is possessed by a demon; when she tells Chip, he doubts—as Thomas doubted the Resurrection—that Jennifer's body has been reanimated by a demon. After two months confinement in a mental institution, Needy knows exactly where Low Shoulder is playing when she escapes. At the end of the film, Needy too has supernatural powers.

Chip who is surnamed "Dove" is the third part of the triad in the allegory. A dove often represents the Holy Spirit in art work.<sup>32</sup> Chip's inclusion makes a Feminist statement that men and women are equal since the members of the Trinity are equal.<sup>33</sup> The Holy Spirit inspires believers with the Truth; and it is while having sex with Chip that Needy “sees” the truth about Jennifer/demon. It is Chip's death that inspires Needy to slay the demon controlling Jennifer's body. The demon must have been predestined to appear amidst these three friends, for all are necessary to defeat it. Anyone other than Jennifer would have killed Needy on the first night, or in the bedroom, or at the pool; but Jennifer loved her too much. Jennifer had to be jealous of what Needy had—Chip. And it is only after he is killed that Needy brings herself to stab Jennifer in the heart, thus killing the demon.

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<sup>32</sup> <http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Holy+Spirit>

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.



Fig. 3 *Last Supper* by Peter Paul Rubens.

Although Chip does not accompany the girls to the bar, he is present symbolically. The show at the bar is Jennifer's last supper;<sup>34</sup> and in one very quick shot, Jennifer and Needy are posed like figures in Rubens' painting *Last Supper*. (See Figs. 3 and 4.) In this painting, the positions of Jesus and John (the beardless figure on the right) suggest a triangle. The triangle is the symbol for the Trinity.<sup>35</sup> In the last supper shot of Jennifer and Needy in the bar, the girls form a triangle. After the fire when Needy calls Chip, he mentions that the members of the band wore eye liner—although he did not see the band. His knowledge of the eye liner confirms his mystical presence at the bar, symbolized by the triangle.

Another important thing to remember is that the Trinity isn't really three, it is *one*.<sup>36</sup> On a spiritual level, Needy loves both Jennifer and Chip, and the girls are one substance. After her experiences, Needy becomes like Jennifer: she swears, throws tantrums, and (in the script) agrees to have sex with an old man in exchange for a ride to Madison<sup>37</sup> in order to kill the members of Low Shoulder. Because the girls are one, this parallelism is reciprocal: when Needy cares about the boys at the dance that the demon seeks to kill, Jennifer cares about them too. The promotional tag line of the film is “She's evil...And not just high school evil.” The allegory, however, tells us that

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<sup>34</sup> The initials of the band, L.S., cannot be coincidental here; in the script, the band was originally called “Soft Shoulder.” Diablo Cody, *Jennifer's Body* (screenplay, 2007), p. 13.

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.symbols.com/encyclopedia/28/281.html>

[http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What\\_is\\_the\\_symbolism\\_of\\_a\\_triangle](http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_is_the_symbolism_of_a_triangle)

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15047a.htm>

<sup>37</sup> Diablo Cody, *Jennifer's Body* (screenplay, 2007), p. 113.

Jennifer is not evil. Although an allegory is hidden in symbols, personifications, and metaphors, its significance is separate from and more important than the literal story.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> “Allegory.” *Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopedia*. 1971 ed. (vol. 1, p. 422.)



Fig. 4 The “Last Supper” from *Jennifer's Body*. Director: Karyn Kusama.

The accumulation of Christian symbolism—allegory—and the Feminist intention of the filmmakers leaves room for no other interpretation. Jennifer is the title character of the film. She ultimately sacrifices her body to save the town and her friend Needy from evil, hence the title of the film:—“And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you....”<sup>39</sup> These are words from the Last Supper. The only other logical interpretation, that Needy, who is narrating the story from a mental institution, is psychotic and making up the whole story, does not fit with the Feminist intentions of the filmmakers because this involves degrading the main character—making her a monster. This is not Feminist at all. Jennifer could be a flawed teenaged girl in a Feminist horror movie, but she cannot be deprived of her humanity.

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<sup>39</sup> Luke 22:19.